

On the Road... Driving through Michigan Work Zones

**A message for truckers —
from the Michigan Department
of Transportation (MDOT)**

What is a "Late Lane Merge System"?

A *Late Lane Merge System* is a series of message boards and sensors that monitor the length of traffic backups. When backups reach a certain distance, the sensors will flash instructions on a series of message boards, such as "Use Both Lanes," "Merge," or "Take Turns." The signs are meant to ease traffic into the work zone.

Message boards will instruct motorists to use both traffic lanes leading up to the work zone until a designated merge point is reached. Next, motorists will take turns in order to merge into one lane, which is called the "zipper effect." To help you visualize, think of exiting from a concert, where two lanes of vehicles take turns merging into one lane.

I drive a truck... what should I do?

Don't ride side-by-side leading up to the work zone. It is preferred that truckers ride in the lane that will be open to traffic in the work zone. If you follow these instructions, you won't have to change lanes at the merge point and this will help reduce the length of traffic backups.

Where can drivers expect to see the Late Lane Merge System?

Beginning in April, MDOT will resurface 8.3 miles of I-69 from the Shiawassee River west of Durand to the Genesee County line. As motorists enter the work zone from either direction, they will use the Late Lane Merge System. This project will maintain one lane of traffic in each direction until November 2006.

Another project that will utilize this system is on I-94 near Paw Paw, from M-51 to Mattawan. The project will begin in April 2006, and be completed in June 2007.

What else is new in Michigan work zones?

This year, motorists will see a new sign in work zones: WHERE WORKERS PRESENT 45. The new speed limit means motorists should remember the three L's: **Look**, **Locate** workers, and **Lower** speed.



Motorists should reduce their speed to 45 mph in any work zone *where workers are present*. If no workers are present, motorists should maintain the posted speed limit. This means that work zones will have two types of speed limit signs – the posted speed limit and a sign that says "Where Workers Present 45." As always, work zones will have additional signage such as, "Road Work Ahead," "Reduced Speed Zone Ahead," "Work Zone Begins," "End Road Work," and lane closure signs, as applicable.

Speeding and driver inattention are the leading causes of injuries and fatalities in highway work zones. In Michigan, there are nearly 6,000 crashes and 2,000 injuries per year. Help protect Michigan families: Please slow down in work zones.

How can I get more info about road construction projects that may affect my travel?

For information about Michigan's road construction, go to the MDOT Web site at www.michigan.gov/mdot, see "Lane Closures" under "Quick Links," or go to www.michigan.gov/pavingtheway for MDOT's annual construction map, "*Paving the Way*."

What is the speed limit for trucks in Michigan?

New legislation (Public Act 19 of 2006) has been approved by the governor and enacted into law on Feb. 9, 2006. The act amends the Michigan Vehicle Code, section 257.627, permitting a truck, a truck-tractor, or a truck-tractor with a semi-trailer or trailer to operate at a speed not to exceed 60 mph on a freeway, if the maximum speed limit on that freeway is 70 mph for noncommercial vehicles. This amendatory act **takes effect nine months after the date it is enacted into law, thus it starts Nov. 9, 2006.**



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